

Vantage Points in the Seventeenth-century City

CHRISTINE STEVENSON

Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, UK

Late twentieth-century social and linguistic theory tells us that the view from the tall building transforms us into analysts and historians, disembodied readers of the civic 'text'. This paper argues that the proposition would have been familiar to seventeenth-century City-dwellers, and does so by pursuing the experience of the elevated observer, or rather, how that experience was depicted, in pictures and words. A great deal of ingenuity, as well as money, was invested in building high after the Great Fire of 1666; a decade later, the anxieties surrounding the prospect of a Catholic royal succession began to prompt some peculiarly forceful anticipations of that modern theoretical construction, the uniquely 'advantaged' spectator.

With terrific panoply, Christian IV of Denmark made a 'solemn' or formal entry into the City of London on 31 July 1606. His visit to England was important for firming up, and warming up, the Oldenburg–Stuart alliance sealed when James VI of Scotland married Christian's sister Anne in 1589. Danish–English relations had spiralled downhill under Elizabeth I through a series of trade and maritime disputes which were still on-going: as recently as 1599, Christian had vowed to do the London merchants 'great hurt' on account of their supply of powder and ammunition to the Turks fighting Denmark's ally Poland.¹ The City's welcome to him, manifested by a temporary arch on Cheapside of 'very happy design' as well as a 'most rich present', was thus enrolled in the cause of Stuart majesty.² Yet these displays were always ambivalent. The crown was the City's major political opponent, but its capacity to celebrate monarchy with due magnificence played a big part in the City's celebration of its own wealth and power.³

The next day, 1 August, Christian returned to the City from Westminster, and the printed accounts describe this visit as, by contrast, 'private' or 'silent' and 'sudden', that is, without warning.⁴ Like many tourists, Christian ascended St Paul's tower where, we read, he 'tooke much delight to behold . . . the richnes[s] of the Thames, so furnished with Ships of great countenance and worth, as he graciously applauded the excellency thereof'; 'the prospect and full view of the whole Citie, whose outstretched limmits I make no doubt, but inflamed him both with delight and

admiration'.⁵ If only because of the trade disputes, local readers would have enjoyed these reconstructions of the Danish king's admiration for the ships on the Thames.⁶

The 'silence' of this second visit is also interesting. Christian was not touring incognito that day, but the accounts of it are picking up on a new dramatic fashion, the so-called 'disguised-ruler play', in which a regent walks unrecognised among his people, out of a distaste for public ceremony, and to view the real effects of his governance. The most famous of these is Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, seemingly first performed for King James eighteen months before his brother-in-law's visit: 'I'll privily away', says Duke Vincentio: 'I love the people, / But do not like to stage me in their eyes. / Though it do well, I do not relish well / Their loud applause and aves vehement.' (I.i.67–70).⁷ It was said that James, famously averse to staging himself in the people's eyes, was none the less curious about preparations for his coronation entry in 1604 and had attempted to 'passe unknowne' through the City to view them. He was spotted, but after taking refuge at the Exchange was still able to enjoy the sight of the merchants standing silently 'like so many pictures' in the courtyard beneath him.⁸

Suggestive, too, are the words used to describe the views from St Paul's' tower and the Exchange's upper floor, the 'prospect', the 'pictures'. They seem to conflate the viewer of the city with the viewer of an image of the city. Art-historical discussions of 'prospects' in the sense of images are generally about estate portraiture, and are governed by the assumption that they celebrate personal property. Explorations of the theme have, for example, shown how such bird's-eye views can evoke not only 'conflicting claims of neighbouring landowners to property, status, and ultimately power', but the methods used to survey and value land, and the agrarian diversity that could maximise that value.⁹ However, while the 'celebration' model may cover James's experience at the Exchange, it will not do for Christian's at the Cathedral. The gaze from on high is not always a sovereign one, that is, but there is still a pleasure, or at least a pleasure to be imputed by others, in a privileged and all-encompassing view of 'ships of great countenance'. John Denham's poem, 'On Cooper's Hill', first published in 1642 and often reprinted to become one of the best known in the language, turned a prospect into a 'vantage for poetic reflections on the health of the state'.¹⁰ Denham in this way defined a new kind of poetry of place, but the view from Cooper's Hill was anticipated and informed by that from St Paul's' tower.

The French cultural theorist Michel de Certeau, describing his view of Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center in 1980, tried to explain what he called this 'lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more'. What, de Certeau asked, 'is the nature of this pleasure of "seeing the whole," of looking down on, totalizing the most immoderate of human texts' — that is, the city as blindly experienced by the burrowing people below. The answer is in the question: like his countryman Roland Barthes before him (and Barthes' subject, in 1964, was the Eiffel Tower), de Certeau found in the view from the tall building both a release from 'the city's grasp' and an equally liberating capacity for all sorts of intellectual transformations. The 'urban fact' becomes the 'concept of a city', and the 'swarming of men' beneath one becomes a 'landscape'.¹¹ Finally, to see the city from above is 'infallibly to imagine a history' (wrote Barthes), 'from the top of a Tower, the mind finds itself dreaming of the

mutation of the landscape which it has before its eyes ... it is duration itself which becomes panoramic.¹² As de Certeau concluded, 'It's hard to be down when you're up'.¹³

Barthes' and de Certeau's construction of the lofty viewer disconnected 'from the real spaces of the city' and in this way privileged with a 'clarified and enhanced vision' now forms part of any discussion of this kind of spectatorship, which can extend to that of the photographer's lens.¹⁴ Such discussions however tend to elide de Certeau's 'lust' with, again, the pleasures of proprietorship, or mastery. What follows pursues the experience of the seventeenth-century City observer looking out from the tall building, or rather, how that experience was depicted, in pictures and words. This is to ignore the differences that might then have been perceived between images' and texts' capacities to transport us in space, but here we are interested in the experience as it was projected on to others, and in that projection, as we will see, some elision did take place.

The City was at once the 'distillation' and 'Chamber of the Brittish Empire' (Bishop John King, in 1620) and a distinct political and juridical realm as rivalrous, even hostile, as it was collaborative with the monarchy.¹⁵ The relationship between Guildhall and Whitehall broke down completely in the early 1640s, and it was generally acknowledged after the restoration of the monarchy, in 1660, that Charles I's execution eleven years earlier had ultimately been prompted by London's hostility and enabled by its power.¹⁶ Just because of this peculiar tension, the experience of viewing the City from on high could be depicted as truly lustful, tinged as much with desperation as desire, and particularly in the later 1670s, when revelations and elaborations of Popish plots placed a premium on praeternaturally clear vision. Before returning to the pleasure, and horror, of looking down from them, we begin with some of the ways in which the City's tall buildings were used and shown, generally speaking.

Buildings had always been understood as platforms as well as containers, such as for the beacons celebrating the visit of Charles I's mother-in-law Marie de' Medici in 1638. The illustration (Figure 1) in Jean Puget de la Serre's *Histoire* of the entry shows as best it can the nocturnal 'brilliance of an infinite number of bonfires [*feux de joye*]'. Along with the masts of the ships firing salvos, the struts and barrels holding the beacons shown mounted on the Tower, two church spires and Old St Paul's, and the tree-like plumes of smoke they emit, further animate a skyline admired for its variety.¹⁷ Similarly, the tower balconies of the first (Gresham's) Royal Exchange accommodated the City Waites' weekly musical performances.¹⁸ Such applications extended to scientific ones — Robert Hooke perched himself on the cross-beams in Old St Paul's' tower for a pendulum experiment in 1664 — and it is worth considering how and if we can distinguish this kind of opportunism from the multifunctionalism that was more common in early modern buildings than it is now.¹⁹ There is no doubt, that is, that the Monument to the Fire (Figure 2) which Hooke designed in collaboration with Christopher Wren, and begun in 1671, was as a memorial intended to serve in large part as a platform from which to view the City rebuilt, and rebuilding, after the fire of 1666; as we will see, it was in this respect, as well as in its form, that the great column intentionally emulated those of Roman antiquity.²⁰ Neither commemoration, spectatorship, nor neo-classicism however precluded its



FIGURE 1 'Representation des fevs de joye qui furent faicts sur leau dans Londres a l'honneur de la reyne la nuit duiour de son entree', engraving, from Jean Puget de la Serre, *Histoire de l'Entree de la Reine Mere du Roy tres Chrestien dans la Grande Bretagne . . .* (1639). Copyright British Library Board. All Rights Reserved (G.10865(2.)). Marie's arrival was not, in fact, the occasion of much joy for either her son-in-law Charles I or London's citizenry

designers' ambitions to use the Monument as a zenith telescope, achieved by inserting lenses into the hollow core at the centre of its internal, winding stair, or as one in a projected series of signal towers, as Hooke described in a lecture in 1684, when he said that at the 'top of the column', 'the eye is, in good part, raised above the smoaky air below'.²¹

Buildings were constructed for viewing, and viewing is implicit in their depictions and descriptions. Seventeenth-century England was fond of cupolas, which stood for privilege whether or not they actually gave access to the roof and the prospect from

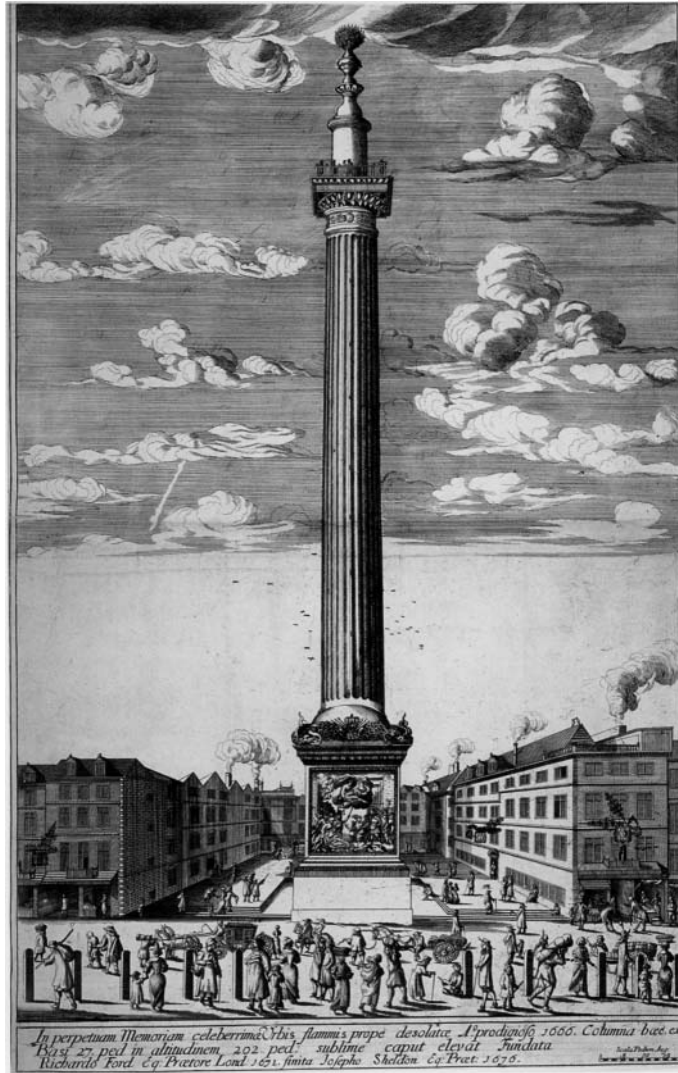


FIGURE 2 The Monument, undated engraving, reproduced by permission of the Guildhall Library, City of London Corporation. A variant ('Sold by Bispham Dickinson at Inigo Jones's head against Exeter Change in ye Strand') compares the column's height to those of ecclesiastical structures

it.²² What Balthazar Gerbier called the 'free discovering' of one's surroundings was, for psychological reasons, one criterion of a healthy house, and we read many praises for fine views from rooftops.²³ First-floor balconies, which became fashionable in seventeenth-century London — a couple are visible, along with a roof platform, in Figure 2 — were often described in terms of the sight they presented when crowded with those watching mayoral and royal processions, as well as the sight they afforded of both the parades and of other spectators. The less genteel, 'disorder'd People below in the Street' presented 'an excellent Scene of Confusion' to those above

them, 'and the Gallantry above were as pleasurable a Sight to the Spectators below': relative heights indicated the social division of the audience.²⁴ Yet the geniality (as it was conventionally described) of this kind of mutual gazing did not outweigh the charm of being the unobserved, or disembodied, gazer.²⁵ No Londoner wished his or her house to be 'overlooked', as it was called, but everyone liked looking over.²⁶ A poem published in 1668 as a dialogue between two young female shoppers calls for balconies to be built above the new Exchange's courtyard, 'from above', says one, 'that so I might look on my slave' — a slip of the tongue! for, 'I mean my truest Love.'²⁷ The views achievable from the Monument, the cathedral, and the domed entrance to Hooke's building for the Royal College of Physicians (like the Monument, begun in 1671), with its first-floor anatomical theatre, form a theme in François (or, Francesco) Colsoni's French-language *Guide de Londres*, first published in 1693.²⁸

London's 'lofty Buildings' were regularly praised, and an interest in buildings' relative heights as an index of domination or pre-eminence is readily apparent too.²⁹ In 1670, John Ogilby wrote that the rebuilt City was 'already looking down, through Private Houses, upon former Publick Structures, hereafter to be the Business of Foreign Nations to See and Wonder at', in this way showing both domestic superiority over Continental architecture and domestic progress: London's new houses look down on its old 'public structures'.³⁰ The distraction and *déshabillé* of the personification of 'London, in Flames' printed in 1681 as the frontispiece to Nathaniel Crouch's *Historical Remarques and Observations of the Ancient and Present State of London and Westminster* is contrasted with the queenly elegance of 'London, in Glory' (Figure 3). The latter presides over a city shown as a neat but, interestingly, not uniform row of grand houses and beyond them the towered front of the rebuilt Exchange. To its left appears what seems to be the turreted steeple then projected (but not built this way) for St Bride, Fleet Street; and to its right, St Stephen Walbrook's dome and, neatly bisecting 'Glory', the Monument.³¹ Topographical accuracy (St Stephen is west of the Exchange on Cornhill, the Monument east) was not the aim: to show urban glory as a diverse and yet somehow coherent assemblage of tall buildings was.

The conceit that height carries with it true, moral loftiness was really productive when it came to ecclesiastical buildings. The letterpress on a variant of the print of the Monument shown in Figure 2 piously compares its 202 feet with the heights of the spires of Salisbury Cathedral (420 feet), and Wren's St Mary le Bow church (225 feet: see Figure 4): the Monument is a wonder, that is, but it is still 'overlooked' by godly ones.³² Divines had always called for churches to be built high: even before the Fire, Presbyterians joked about watching bishops 'Steeple upon Steeple set, / As if they meant that way to Heaven get'.³³ After 1666, the theme took on real urgency: the competition was not, now, some vaguely-evoked rich man's palace or pagan temple, but very real dissenting meeting-houses, perversely crowded though they lacked spires and bells.

A developing appreciation for the aesthetics of the skyline contributed to Christopher Wren's reconciliation with the Gothic, at least in the form of cathedral towers and church spires. While his report of May 1666 on Old St Paul's refers disparagingly to 'the lean Shaft of a Steeple', half a century later (in 1713), he was advising the Dean of Westminster that a spire and western towers on Westminster



FIGURE 3 'London in Flames, London in Glory', frontispiece of Richard Burton [alias for Nathaniel Crouch], *Historical Remarques and Observations of the Ancient and Present State of London and Westminster... till the year 1681...* (1681), here from the third edition. Copyright British Library Board. All Rights Reserved (577.a.8(2)). The despairing London and her dragon-supporter are clearly borrowed from Cibber's sculpted relief on the Monument

Abbey 'will give a proper Grace to the whole Fabrick, and the West-end of the City, which seems to want it'.³⁴ A great deal of ingenuity, as well as money, had been invested in the heights of the rebuilt spires, which in this way continued to distinguish the City from its flatter, Court-bound neighbour to the west. In mid-1678, the masons Thomas Cartwright and John Tompson were awarded an extra £30 on account of



FIGURE 4 St Mary le Bow, engraving by Nicholas Yeates after Robert Thatcher, publ. John Garrett c.1680. Reproduced by permission of the Guildhall Library, City of London Corporation

the danger and difficulty of fixing the scaffolding when they reached the stage above the circle of columns on St Mary le Bow's spire (1678–80), and Wren's design, with the internal parabolic dome supporting a cylinder of stone, is an elegant thing.³⁵ St Mary's was the first of the new City spires; its primacy, and great height, owed something (we can assume) to the church's location on Cheapside and that street's views of splendid shops and the annual mayoral progresses. Edward Hatton's *New*

View of London (1708), casually mentions the balcony ‘adorned with Bows or Arches, all which, you pass under in walking round this part of the Spire’: the ‘continuance of the Starecase’ for which Cartwright and Tompson contracted in August 1678 was evidently not just for maintenance purposes, or at least not by the early eighteenth century.³⁶ This is Hatton’s only reference to walking around spires, and one would like to know how much the telescoped, arcaded stages of St Bride Fleet Street’s spire (1701–02 but perhaps designed this way two decades earlier), for example, were built with prospects in mind.³⁷ A satirical poem written around the end of 1679 does have the great gilded dragon on top of St Mary le Bow spying ‘Marvels from that Prospect’.³⁸ Typical of that date, however, the marvels, which include the Monument, Hooke’s Bethlem (Bedlam) hospital (1674–76), and the new St Paul’s’ building site, are made emblematic of the pusillanimity and hypocrisy of Guildhall and Whitehall alike.

The ‘desire to see the city preceded the means of satisfying it’, wrote de Certeau, and it is significant that two Elizabethan depictions of unrealised towers show persons looking out.³⁹ In the 1562 design for a new spire for St Paul’s Cathedral drawn (or procured) by the Queen’s Surveyor, John Revell, the statue of St Paul, in the aedicule, is joined by an observer (Figure 5): down on the ground we will look up to and identify with both.⁴⁰ Frans Hogenberg’s engraving (*c.*1569) of the courtyard of Thomas Gresham’s Exchange (begun in 1566), shows, extraordinarily, a giant Corinthian column topped with a great carved grasshopper, the Gresham crest, on the north side of the building (Figure 6).⁴¹ A tiny spectator stands under the arches supporting the insect. Yet there was an important, and realised, precedent for the column-platform — and for the visualisation of the privileged viewer.

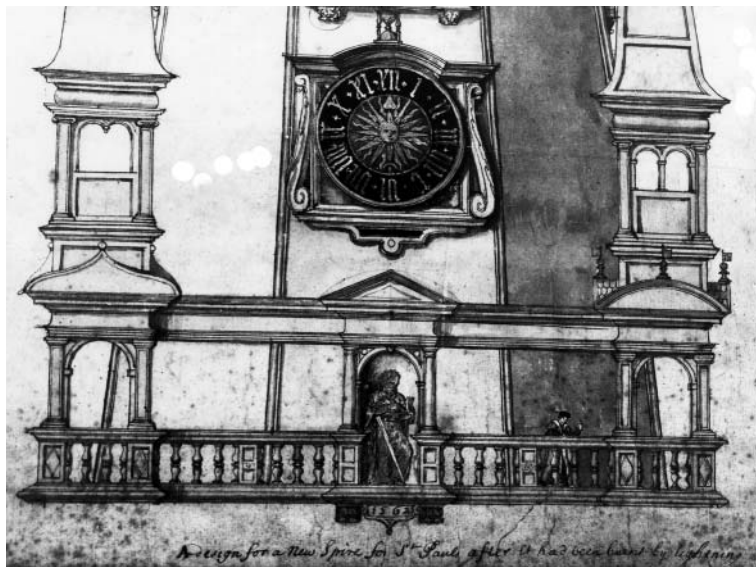


FIGURE 5 Detail of the drawing for a new spire for St Paul’s Cathedral, dated 1562. Copyright Society of Antiquaries of London. Photo: Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

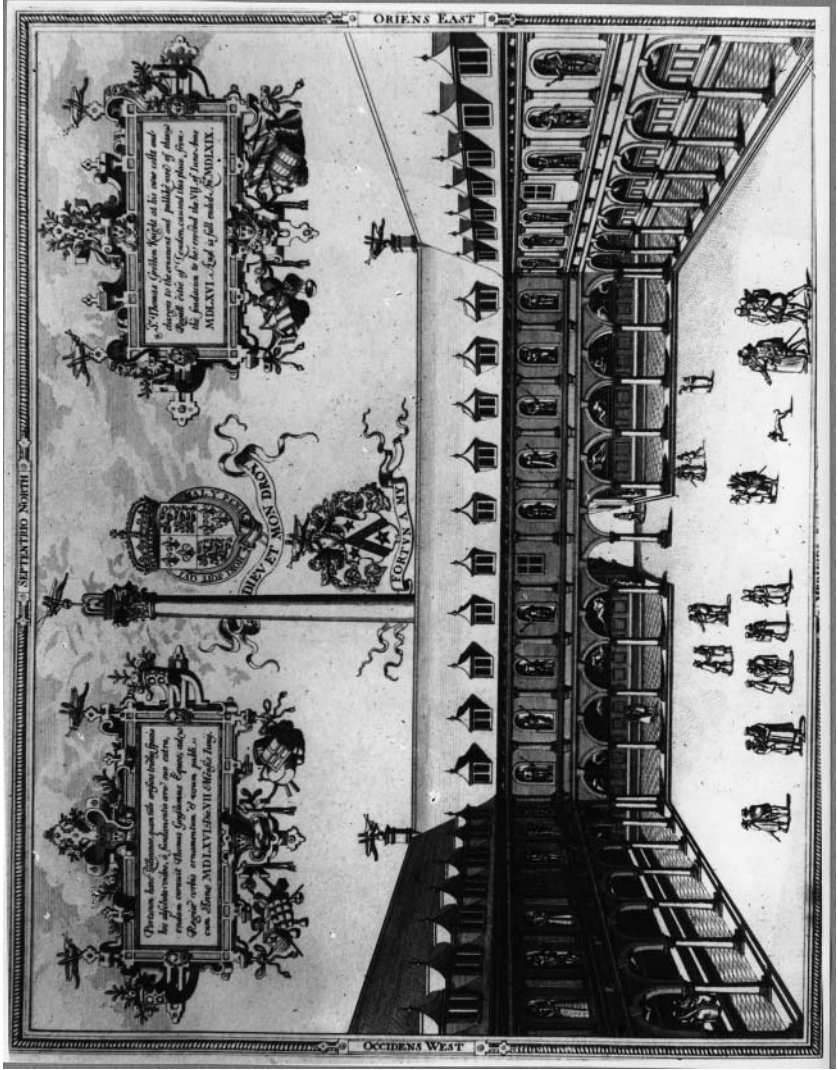


FIGURE 6 Frans Hogenberg's engraving of the courtyard of the Royal Exchange (c.1569), in an early nineteenth-century facsimile. Photo: Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

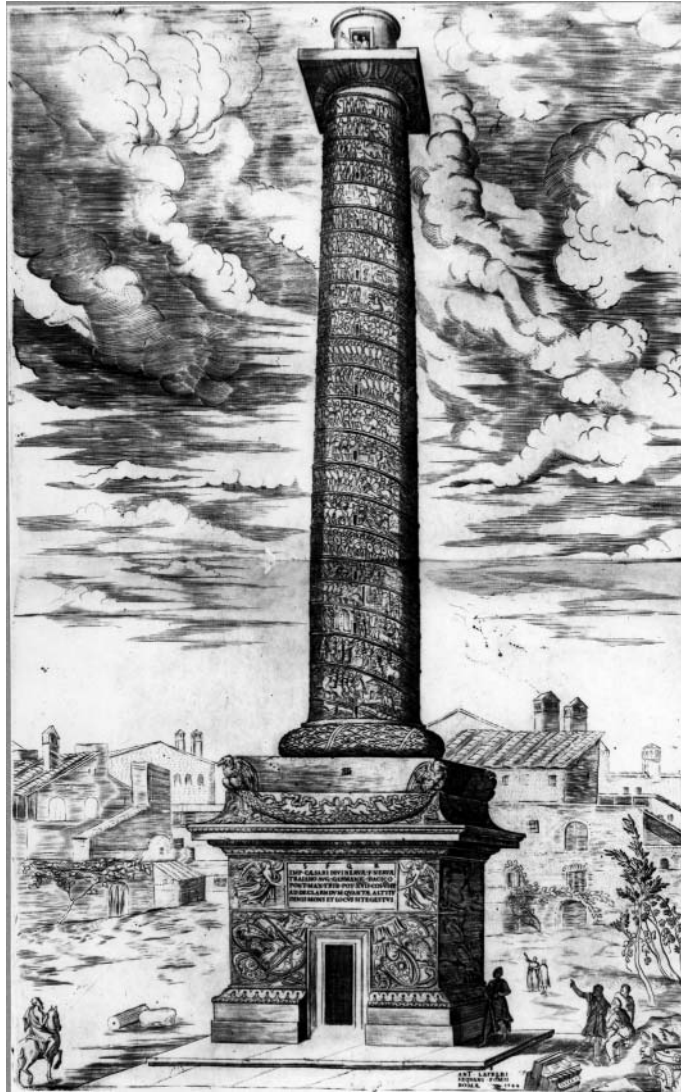


FIGURE 7 Trajan's Column, in an engraving from Antonio Lafreri's *Speculum romanae magnificentiae* (Rome 1540–80). Photo: Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

Trajan's column was built, in 113 AD, to be climbed.⁴² It celebrated the emperor as the benefactor of a new forum, Imperial Rome's most magnificent, in part by permitting an elevated view of the forum itself; a dedicatory inscription on the base (available to Hooke and Wren through modern publications) suggests as much.⁴³ After serving as a church belfry, the column again become a public monument in the 1530s, and celebrations of the experience of climbing its stair were published. Figure 7 shows an engraving from Antonio Lafreri's sixteenth-century *Mirror of Roman Magnificence*, which has 'two figures waving from the doorway at the top'.⁴⁴ This may have been Hogenberg's inspiration in showing the Exchange's grasshopper

column. Certainly, London's Monument to the Fire was built to emulate, and surpass, the Roman exemplar and in this way straightforwardly, we might think, evoke imperial authority, too. Yet as the composition of Figure 2 suggests, the column was also an instrument with which to view newly clarified and ordered urban spaces. Their glories are certainly, in contemporary texts, made to mirror Charles II's, but more immediately, and regularly, his citizens' own wealth, pride, and self-sacrifice. In fact, designing the Monument, including the wording of its inscriptions and the iconography of the sculpted ornament, demanded a careful calibration of royal against civic pretensions at a time, the mid-1670s, when both parties were working hard to maintain mutual amity.⁴⁵ At the end of the decade, the relationship suffered serious damage in the wake of the successive revelations of the Duke of York's conversion to Roman Catholicism and of the details of the so-called Popish Plot.

Late twentieth-century social and linguistic theory tells us that the view from the tall building transforms us into analysts and historians, effectively disembodied readers of the civic 'text'. From its completion, the Monument, built in the wake of a fire that some thought had been the latest in a century's worth of Roman Catholic atrocities, was figured as a place from which to see 'How all the City is inclin'd', as one poem (from 1676) has it.⁴⁶ This is a loyal work that has London inclined to love its 'Cæsar', but other, ultra-Protestant writers found in the city spread beneath them the history of a supine and degenerate Stuart dynasty. The poem of 1679 about Bow Church, mentioned earlier, has the dragon's 'Glaring Eyes' looking over and then beyond the follies of London and Westminster to the threat from France. The same year, at the height of anxiety about the Popish Plot and the likelihood of a Catholic succession, a best-selling pamphlet invited its readers to imagine themselves high up on the Monument, looking out over a City that is once again in flames: 'At the same instant fancy that amongst the distracted Crowd, you behold Troops of Papists, ravishing your Wives and your Daughters, dashing your little Childrens brains out against the walls, plundering your Houses, and cutting your own Throats . . .'⁴⁷

The most fascinating of all the observers, and apparently the first of the critical ones, however appears in a poem called 'Hodges's [*sic*] Vision from the Monument', published at the end of the century and then assigned to Andrew Marvell, which had been circulating in manuscript since the 1670s.⁴⁸ The poem describes how Hodge, a plain country 'clown', climbs the Monument and is there transformed: 'Almighty change he feels in every part'. This alteration recapitulates not only that described by Barthes and de Certeau, but the entire seventeenth-century literary development whereby Hodge's initial, simple wonder at 'The Imperial Town, with lofty Turrets Crown'd' gives way to the dreadful clarity of the view from on high. Hodge looks west to Whitehall, 'the lewd Palace of the Plotting King', where he witnesses 'bloom-ing Youth adore Priapus's shrine' and an incestuous, 'Goatish God'-king.⁴⁹ Shattered by these scenes of viciousness, Hodge falls off the Monument and dies, but not before he has taken the world in: 'From *Charles's* Dukes', that is, the king's bastard children, 'to *Europes* armed States', 'He Views, Discerns, Unciphers, Penetrates.' It is a wonderful line, with its free elision of looking and reading. Extraordinary times, and an extraordinary construction, had prompted this perfect anticipation of that modern theoretical construction, the observer 'cut off from the world' and yet (in both senses) comprehending it, but Hodge would have been unthinkable without a

long civic tradition of praising and picturing tall buildings and the views from them.⁵⁰

Acknowledgement

My thanks to the two anonymous referees who offered such constructive suggestions for this paper's improvement.

Notes

- ¹ S. Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark–Norway and the House of Stuart, 1603–1660: A Diplomatic and Military Analysis* (East Linton, 2000), 24, 30–31.
- ² CSPV, vol. 10, 1603–1607 (1900), 385; *The King of Denmarkes Welcome: Containing his Arrivall, Abode, and Entertainment, both in the Citie and Other Places* (1606), 22.
- ³ I paraphrase S. Wells, 'Jacobean City Comedy and the Ideology of the City', *English Literary History*, 48 (1981), 37–60, on 53.
- ⁴ He 'past privately' (*King of Denmarkes Welcome*, 25); 'his gracious acceptance of their loues shewed, may be gathered, by his sudaine and silent comming againe in person to view the state of this Citie, and rare monuments thereof . . .' (H. Roberts, *England's Farewell to Christian the Fourth, Famous King of Denmarke* . . . [1606], B1v).
- ⁵ Roberts, *England's Farewell*, B2; *King of Denmarkes Welcome*, 26. On visiting St Paul's, P. Henderson, 'Life at the Top: Sixteenth and Seventeenth-century Roofscapes', *Country Life*, 177 (3 January 1985), 6–9.
- ⁶ The admiration continued when he went on to the Exchange, where 'it was told [to] his Highnesse' how the merchants' 'great exchanges . . . their greatest affayres were every day twice there effected.' Roberts, *England's Farewell*, B2.
- ⁷ F. Whigham, 'John Marston's *The Fawn*: Flattering Courtly Desire', in D.L. Smith, R. Streier, and D. Bevington (eds), *The Theatrical City: Culture, Theatre and Politics in London 1576–1649* (Cambridge, 1995), 137–56, on 139; on the play in relation to contemporary events, J.W. Lever, 'The Date of *Measure for Measure*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 10, (1959), 381–88.
- ⁸ G. Dugdale, *The Time Triumphant, Declaring in Briefe, the Ar[r]ival of our Sovereigne Lieage Lord, King James into England* . . . (1604), B1v–B2r. See Lever, 'The Date of *Measure for Measure*', 384–85 and A. Gordon, 'Performing London: The Map and the City in Ceremony', in A. Gordon and B. Klein (eds), *Literature, Mapping, and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2001), 69–88, on 83.
- ⁹ L. Wortley, 'City Merchants' Landownership around Henley-on-Thames and the Paintings of Jan Siberechts', in M. Galinou (ed.), *City Merchants and the Arts 1670–1720* (Wetherby, 2004), 93–102, on 96 (quotation), 99–102. See S. Daniels, 'Goodly Prospects: English Estate Portraiture, 1670–1730', in N. Alfrey and S. Daniels (eds), *Mapping the Landscape: Essays on Art and Cartography* (Nottingham, 1990), 9–12.
- ¹⁰ M. Craske, 'Richard Jago's *Edge-Hill* Revisited: A Traveller's Prospect of the Health and Disease of a Succession of National Landscapes', in R. Wrigley and G. Revill (eds), *Pathologies of Travel* (Amsterdam, 2000), 121–56, on 127–28, quotation 127.
- ¹¹ M. de Certeau, 'Walking in the City' in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980), transl. S. Rendell (Berkeley, 1984), 91–110, quotations on 92, 94; R. Barthes, 'The Eiffel Tower' (1964), transl. R. Howard, in *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies* (Berkeley, 1997), 5–7, quotation on 8.
- ¹² Barthes, 'Eiffel Tower', 11.
- ¹³ de Certeau, 'Walking in the City', 92 (quotation), 93.
- ¹⁴ J. Monteyne, *The Printed Image in Early Modern London: Urban Space, Visual Representation, and Social Exchange* (Aldershot, 2007), 202. On photography, and mastery, M. Wigoder, 'The "Solar Eye" of Vision: Emergence of the Skyscraper-Viewer in the Discourse on Heights in New York City, 1890–1920', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 61 (2002), 152–69; M.N. Woods, 'Women on Top: Gender and Photographing New York City Skyscrapers', *Journal of Architecture*, 11 (2006), 577–84.
- ¹⁵ J. King, *A Sermon at Paules Crosse, on behalfe of Paules Church* . . . (1620), 43.
- ¹⁶ See, for example, P. Zagorin, 'Clarendon and Hobbes', *Journal of Modern History*, 57 (1985), 593–616, on 610.

- ¹⁷ The print is number 3/12 in B. Adams, *London Illustrated 1604–1851: A Survey and Index of Topographical Books and their Plates* (1983), which suggests (on 7) that St Laurence Pountney (not rebuilt after the Fire) may be one of the churches. Jean Puget de la Serre, *Histoire de l'Entree de la Reine Mere du Roy tres Chrestien dans la Grande Bretagne* ... (1639), sig. M: 'l'esclat d'un nombre infiny de feux de joye'.
- ¹⁸ A. Saunders, 'The Building of the Exchange', in A. Saunders (ed.), *The Royal Exchange* (1997), 36–47, on 41.
- ¹⁹ On tall buildings' instrumental uses, L. Jardine, 'Monuments and Microscopes: Scientific Thinking on a Grand Scale in the Early Royal Society', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 55 (2001), 289–308 (290, 301 for Hooke's experiment); M. Cooper, 'A More Beautiful City': Robert Hooke and the Rebuilding of London after the Great Fire (Aldershot, 2003), 45–63, 75–77, 229–30 n.13.
- ²⁰ Section 20 of the 1667 Act for Rebuilding (18 & 19 Charles II c. 8), quoted C. Welch, *History of the Monument. With a Brief Account of the Great Fire of London, which it Commemorates* (1893), 4, which specifies that a 'Colonne or Pillar' be erected, 'the better to preserve the Memory of this dreadful Visitation'.
- ²¹ L. Jardine, *On a Grand Scale: The Outstanding Career of Sir Christopher Wren* (2002), xi–xiv, 317–21, 542 n.36. As Stephen Inwood points out, however (*The Man Who Knew Too Much: The Strange and Inventive Life of Robert Hooke 1635–1703* [2002], 267–68), the barometric readings conducted at the Monument in May 1678 were nothing that had not been done elsewhere: the charm was the location. Hooke in R.T. Gunther (ed.), *Early Science in Oxford*, vol. 10, *The Life and Work of Robert Hooke*, part 4 (Oxford, 1935), 659.
- ²² N. Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry 1480–1680* (1999), 237, 240–41, 328–29. Cupolas presented practical difficulties and they hardly had Vitruvian sanction, but as Balthazar Gerbier wrote, 'A Noble Paire of Staires should have a Cupelo ...', also to illuminate the flight: *A Brief Discourse Concerning the Three Chief Principles of Magnificent Building. Viz. Solidity, Conveniency, and Ornament* (1664), 13. Compare H. Colvin and J. Newman (eds), *Of Building: Roger North's Writings on Architecture* (Oxford, 1981), 60, and the letter written in 1695 transcribed in C. van Eck (ed.), *British Architectural Theory 1540–1750: An Anthology of Texts* (Aldershot, 2003), 95.
- ²³ Gerbier, *Brief Discourse*, 19, 15; A. Wear, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550–1680* (Cambridge, 2000), 194–95. Samuel Pepys (to take only one example of praise for a view) went up to the roof of Clarendon House, in the West End, in early 1666, 'and there', he wrote, 'is the noblest prospect that I ever saw in my life, Greenwich being nothing to it. And in every thing is a beautiful house ...'. Quoted A. Fowler (ed.), *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-century Estate Poems and Related Items* (Edinburgh, 1994), 311.
- ²⁴ Thomas Jordan's mayoral pageant-book of 1679: *London in Luster: Projecting Many Bright Beams of Triumph* ..., 16. On City balconies see Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry*, 173, 188–89. They are specifically mentioned among the glories of the rebuilt City in the broadsheet *Description of the Dreadful Fire of London, in the Year of our Lord 1666* ... (1683).
- ²⁵ Peter Burke makes the point about the vertical and social hierarchies: 'Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century London', *London Journal*, 3 (1977), 143–62, on 150–51.
- ²⁶ J. Stow, *A Survey of London* (1598, 'increased' 1603), with an Introduction by A. Fraser (Stroud, 2005), 128, 143; J. Evelyn, *Diary*, E.S. de Beer (ed.), 6 vols (Oxford, 1955), vol. 4, 345 (10 October 1683) regarding Montagu House.
- ²⁷ 'Ehver Kynd', *Londons-nonsuch, or, The Glory of the Royal Exchange* ... (1668), unpaginated.
- ²⁸ F. Colsoni, *Le Guide de Londres pour les estrangers* ... (1693), W.H. Godfrey (ed.) (1951), 9, 13.
- ²⁹ John Taylor's mayoral pageant-book of 1634: *The Triumphs of Fame and Honour* ..., A7.
- ³⁰ The print is number 13/1 in Adams, *London Illustrated*.
- ³¹ An early drawing (All Souls College, Oxford) for the St Bride steeple is reproduced in P. Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren* (1996), 142.
- ³² Guildhall Library, Map and Print Room, 420/MON: three variants of the same print. J. Lang, *Rebuilding St. Paul's after the Great Fire of London* (Oxford, 1956), 214 quotes Ned Ward on the spire that he thought would be erected on top of St Paul's' dome: it will surpass 'Bow steeple dragon, or the Monument's flaming urn'.
- ³³ Robert Wild's 'Poem upon the Imprisonment of Mr. [Edmund] Calamy in Newgate' [1663], in *Iter Boreale, with Large Additions to Several Other Poems* ... (1670), 73–78, on 74; see also Aubin, *London in Flames*, 368. For examples of calls for tall churches, see Giles Fleming's sermon *Magnificence Exemplified: and, The Repairs of Saint Pauls Exhorted unto* ... (1634), 42–43; J. Newman, 'Laudian Literature and the Interpretation of

- Caroline Churches in London', in D. Howarth (ed.), *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts* (Cambridge, 1993), 168–88, on 168–69 (quoting Foulke Roberts, 1639), and G. Alsop, *An Orthodox Plea for the Sanctuary of God, Common Service, White Robe of the House . . .* (1669), 2–3.
- ³⁴ L.M. Soo (ed.), *Wren's 'Tracts' on Architecture and Other Writings* (Cambridge, 1998), 53–54, 90 (quotation).
- ³⁵ R.H. Harrison, undated copies of extracts from the 'St Paul's Cathedral Library' book of contracts re St Mary le Bow. Guildhall Prints and Maps, Noble A391/5: agreement with Cartwright and Tompson dated 1 August 1678. The whole seems 'rather balanced than built upon the walls below': J. Britton and A.C. Pugin, *Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London. With Historical and Descriptive Accounts of Each Edifice*, 2nd ed., W.H. Leeds (ed.), vol. 1 (1838), 60–61.
- ³⁶ *A New View of London; or, An Ample Account of that City*, 2 vols (1708), vol. 2, 370 (Hatton infallibly supplies the heights of the church spires, suggesting that these data were carefully kept, perhaps by vestries); Harrison's copies of extracts from the 'St Paul's Cathedral Library' book of contracts: agreement with Cartwright and Tompson dated 1 August 1678.
- ³⁷ S. Bradley and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London. I: The City of London*, rev. ed. (1999), 210: 'That the design was made before 1700 is also suggested by the diminishing stages (albeit apparently square) sketched on top of the existing tower in Morgan's panorama of 1682.' Compare however Jeffery, *City Churches*, 142–43, which also explains, without elaboration, that towers 'provide viewing-points for ceremonial and other occasions and, at a lower level, rooms for vestry meetings and other parish functions' (128).
- ³⁸ 'On Bow-Church and Steeple', first published 1683, now often attributed to the Earl of Rochester, l. 33, in R.A. Aubin (ed.), *London in Flames, London in Glory: Poems on the Fire and Rebuilding of London 1666–1709* (New Brunswick, 1943), 249–51.
- ³⁹ de Certeau, 'Walking in the City', 92; compare Barthes, 'Eiffel Tower', 8.
- ⁴⁰ My colleague Geoffrey Fisher reminded me of the viewer's presence in this drawing, on which see G. Higgott, 'The Fabric to 1670', in D. Keene, A. Burns, and A. Saint (eds), *St Paul's. The Cathedral Church of London 604–2004* (2004), 171–89, on 172–73.
- ⁴¹ Saunders, 'Building of the Exchange', 41. The column remained current in as much as Hogenberg's view was reproduced as part of a medley engraving (1712) by Sutton Nicholls, illustrated K. Gibson, 'The Kingdom's Marble Chronicle': The Embellishment of the First and Second Buildings, 1600 to 1690', in Saunders (ed.), *The Royal Exchange*, 138–73, on 141.
- ⁴² See <http://cheiron.mcmaster.ca/trajan/introductory_essay.html#emperor> (accessed 10 September 2007) for an evocative description of the modern experience.
- ⁴³ A. Claridge, 'Hadrian's Column of Trajan', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 6, (1993), 5–22, on 10–11, 22. See also M. Wilson Jones, 'One Hundred Feet and a Spiral Stair: The Problem of Designing Trajan's Column', *ibid.* 23–38, on 23, 27, and P. Stewart, *Roman Art* (Oxford, 2004), 46 on the Column's function as a 'viewing platform or belvedere from which Trajan's exceptional engineering project could be viewed' (*ibid.*). On Hooke and Wren's understanding of the antique column and its uses, J.E. Moore, 'The Monument, or, Christopher Wren's Roman Accent', *Art Bulletin*, 80 (1998), 498–533, especially 499, 500.
- ⁴⁴ Claridge, 'Hadrian's Column of Trajan', 6.
- ⁴⁵ C. Stevenson, 'Robert Hooke, Monuments, and Memory', *Art History* 28 (2005), 43–73; Moore, 'The Monument'.
- ⁴⁶ *London's Index or Some Reflexions on the New Built Monument* (1676), stanza 5. The 'inclin'd' is an astronomical pun: 'In this bright Star Astrologers may find, / Being at the top, / Without a Telescope, / How all the City is inclin'd.'
- ⁴⁷ C. Blount ('Junius Brutus'), *An Appeal from the Country to the City, for the Preservation of His Majesties Person, Liberty, Property, and the Protestant Religion* (1679), 1. See Monteyne, *Printed Image*, 198–203 for a fascinating analysis of an engraving published by Benjamin Harris in 1681 (*A Scheme of Popish Cruelties . . .*) in relation to the *Appeal* and to the Monument, which the engraving shows.
- ⁴⁸ 'Hodges's Vision from the Monument, December, 1675. By A. Marvell, Esq.', in *Poems on Affairs of State, from the Time of Oliver Cromwell to the Abdication of King James the Second* (1697), 102–6. This seems to have pre-dated the 1679 *Appeal*: Moore, 'The Monument', 528 n.41.
- ⁴⁹ R. Weil, 'Sometimes a Scepter is Only a Scepter', in L. Hunt (ed.), *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origin of Modernity, 1500–1800* (New York, 1993), 124–53, on 125–26, part of a discussion that brought this poem to my attention.
- ⁵⁰ Barthes, 'Eiffel Tower', 17.

Notes on Contributor

Christine Stevenson is Senior Lecturer in Early Modern British architecture at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She is the author of *Medicine and Magnificence: British Hospital and Asylum Architecture* (Yale University Press, 2000) and is now completing another book, about the politics of architecture in Restoration London.